Resolution 5. Regarding remission of land revenue, what is possible has been done—The question of remission of school fees will be considered.

Resolution 6. The matter is under correspondence with the Excise Commissioner.

Resolution 7. The matter is under correspondence with the Superintendent of Economic Survey.

Resolution 8. No special relief is called for.

(b) 24 in the year 1108 and 31 in the year 1109.

Fall in prices of Agricultural products.

228. Mr. Joseph Pettah.—Will the Government be pleased to state—

(a) whether they are not aware of the fact that the present economic depression has been mainly caused by the heavy fall in the prices of agricultural products;

(b) what attempts, if any, have the Government made so far to raise the price of the agricultural products of the State;

(c) have they made any enquiries or investigations to see whether the prices of cocoanut products cannot be raised by finding out markets for the same in other parts of India, especially in North India;

(d) have the Government taken any steps so far, to advertise the cocoanut products of the State in the Indian markets?

Mr. I. N. Menon.—(a) Yes.

(b) The depression being almost world-wide, Government have to wait for a general improvement in World Trade conditions.

(c) Yes.

(d) No.

Mr. Joseph Pettah.—(c) May I know what was the result of the enquiry made in other parts of India with regard to the raising of prices?

Mr. I. N. Menon.—The results of the enquiry are in the shape of suggestions and in the form of letters. I shall read some of them. One is a reply to the enquiry made from the Department of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, India:—

"With reference to your letter on the above subject (*i. e.*, regarding coir manufactures) I have the honour to say that the decline in the exports of coir manufactures other than rope is due partly to higher prices and partly on account of larger utilization of cheaper substitutes. In the United Kingdom, however, enquiries for coir mats were encouraging. These were due partly to the imposition of the 10% import duty on foreign mats and mattings early in 1932 which tended to check the imports of mats and rugs from the Continent and to divert attention to India".

"I regret I am unable to offer any suggestion regarding the quality, workmanship and design of these articles with a view to suit present market

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conditions. The Indian Trade Commissioners at London and Hamburg may, however, be in a position to offer some useful suggestions" etc.

From Hamburg I got the following reply.—

"If you would like to have a trade opinion regarding Cochin-made coir articles, I would suggest your participating at the next spring fair held at Leipzig in 1934. The Government of India occupies a stand at that fair and no charges are made to firms in India wishing to participate. They are only responsible for the freightage of their goods from India to Hamburg and back again to India, if they are not sold at the end of the fair. If you will therefore be good enough to let me know whether there are any firms likely to be interested in sending their samples for display at the Indian Government stand, I shall be pleased to let these firms have full particulars regarding participation."

Then one from London:—"I am directed to refer to your letter, in which you have asked for our opinion as to the causes responsible for the decline both in the price and demand for coir fibre and articles made for coir yarn, and have also enquired regarding the possibility of finding fresh markets for and suggestions regarding improvement in the manufacture of these articles. In reply, I am to say that careful enquiries have been made in the market, as a result of which it has been ascertained that there are no special causes responsible for the decline in this particular trade beyond the reduction in trade generally all over the world. So far as this country is concerned it is understood that the biggest markets for these goods are the industrial areas, and with the decline in employment in those areas, there has been a natural fall in the demand for these goods.

So far as our enquiries go, there are no complaints regarding the quality of these goods and consequently it is felt that no suggestions of any value regarding their improvement can be made. We have to wait for a general improvement in world trade conditions, which happily now seems to be appearing, as with this improvement there is bound to be a greater demand for coir goods. On the whole, it is felt here, that these goods have held their own rather better than most other goods during the prevailing trade depression".

Mr. Joseph Pettah.—Was any proposal sent to Hamburg with regard to the sending of goods?

Mr. I. N. Menon.—I brought the matter to the notice of the Government. But due to shortage of funds we cannot do it this year.

Mr. Joseph Pettah.—Will the Government be pleased to publish in the Gazette the suggestions and opinions that have been gathered in this connection for the information of the public?

Mr. I. N. Menon.—Government would like to do it.

Mr. Joseph Pettah.—(d) Did not this idea ever occur to the Government that some advertisement may be done usefully in the Indian markets?

Mr. I. N. Menon.—The question that was referred was not so specific. It was suggested that we should write to Europe for details. There is no harm in getting our things advertised.

Mr. Joseph Pettah.—I was referring to some method of advertising our goods in the North Indian markets because it

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seems to me that there is some possibility of finding a market for our goods in North India.

Mr. I. N. Menon.- The letter from the Chamber of Commerce shows that what we lack is not advertisement. Our real difficulty is foreign competition.

Mr. Joseph Pettah.—That happens only in the case of cocoanuts in bulk. What about cocoanut-oil, etc.?

Mr. I. N. Menon.—In the case of cocoanut-oil also.

Mr. Joseph Pettah.—But if we advertise in the North Indian markets can we not find scope for our goods also?

Mr. I. N. Menon.—Our cocoanuts are already in the Indian market. What we want is not advertisement but removal of these hindrances to our supply.

Mr. Joseph Pettah.—Have the Government taken any steps to see a way out of this foreign competition?

Mr. I. N. Menon.—We have certain moral obligations since we are committed on account of the Ottawa agreement and the Interportal Trade Convention. We cannot fix these things ourselves.

Mr. Joseph Pettah.—Do the Government know that the Travancore Government have taken any steps in that matter?

Mr. I. N. Menon.—My information is that they tried and failed.

Mr. Paul Mampilli.—Have our Government addressed the British Government regarding this?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—Yes, we have. They have said that they will do whatever is possible.

Mr. A. Sankara Poduval.—May I know whether the feasibility of extracting sugar from cocoanut has been considered?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—I do not think that has been considered.

Mr. M. P. Cherian.—Extracting sugar from sweet toddy is under consideration.

Withdrawal of prosecutions under section 270 C. P. C.

229. **Mr. C. A. Ouseph.**—Will the Government be pleased to state whether they have withdrawn during the last five years any prosecutions launched under section 270 of the Cochin Penal Code; if so, how many, with the names of the accused?

Mr. P. Nilakanta Menon.—Yes—one case under sections 321, 270 and 332, C. P. C., 6 accused.

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